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RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS PRIORITY 9829  
RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY 3334  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 3937  
RUEHLB/AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 3184  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY 1308  
RUEHDM/AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY 3918  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0770  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 1241  
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY 7812  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 5277  
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 0191  
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY 4324  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 6267  
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 8666  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY  
RHMFIUU/COMSIXTHFLT PRIORITY

UNCLAS TEL AVIV 003566

SIPDIS

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM  
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA  
HQ USAF FOR XXXX  
DA WASHDC FOR SASA  
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA  
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR  
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD  
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD  
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL  
PARIS ALSO FOR POL  
ROME FOR MFO

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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

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SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:  
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[1](#)1. President Bush's Doctrine

[1](#)2. Gaza

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Key Stories in the Media:  
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Ha'aretz reported that U.S. general (ret.) James Jones said in his

meetings on Tuesday with Israeli ministers that he will not serve as a "judge" and arbitrator of road map progress. According to the newspaper Jones noted that U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice wants him to draft a strategic plan for a stable security arrangement for the two state solution.

Ha'aretz reported that the Housing Ministry has given the green light for a new Jewish neighborhood in East Jerusalem. The neighborhood, if built, would be the largest constructed in that part of the city since 1967.

All media quoted Prime Minister Ehud Olmert as saying that Israel shall find all of those responsible for Qassam rocket firing. Yediot Ahahronot cited different officials from the IDF and the GSS praising each other for the successful IAF activity on Tuesday. Maariv reported that PM Olmert called what is happening in the south as war.

Ha'aretz reported that the Prime Minister's office has established a task force dedicated only to preparations for President Bush's visit in January.

Maariv reported, citing Palestinian sources, that the IDF has started using new anti-tank rockets that are much more accurate and advanced against missile launchers in the Gaza Strip.

IDF Radio aired an interview Wednesday morning with Transportation Minister Shaul Mofaz, in which he said that Israel should not rule out indirect negotiations with Hamas in an effort to halt Qassam rocket fire at southern Israel

Maariv reported that Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and her Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov have agreed to visa free travel between the two countries.

Yediot reported that last week the GSS and the security establishment are establishing a committee of three to approve retroactively targeted killings of terror organization activists.

Leading media quoted Attorney-General Menachem Mazuz as saying in his testimony to the Winograd Committee that the IDF acted within international law during the Second Lebanon War.

Yediot reported that General Gadi Shamni, Head of the Central Command, is warning that stopping the work on the separation fence might lead to terror attacks.

Kul Al Arab reveals an outline developed among extremist right leaders and few Kadima MKs to deport Muslims from the Galilee to the Naqab, while keeping the Christians and Druze, in order to implement the 'Jewish State' project as part of a future plan to exchange southern [Israeli] lands with the Palestinians.

Both Kul Al Arab and Assennara reported that the Israeli government has finally recognized Bishop Theophilous as the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem after more than two years of opposition.

## 1. President Bush's Doctrine:

### Summary:

Columnist Michael Freund wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post: "It is not that the Bush Doctrine is dead -- it most certainly isn't. But the way things are going of late, it sure seems to be in need of resuscitation."

Conservative contributor Menachem Ben wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv: "George Bush junior will be listed in history as one of the greatest presidents that America and the world has ever had."

### Block Quotes:

## 1I. "Introducing George W. Clinton"

Columnist Michael Freund wrote in the conservative, independent Jerusalem Post (19/12): "Will the real George W. please stand up? After seven years of fearlessly confronting evil, both rhetorically and militarily, the Bush administration seems to have faded away, replaced instead by a meek shadow of its former self. Firm resolve has given way to disappointing frailty, as the shape and direction of US foreign policy increasingly resembles something taken straight out of Bill Clinton's playbook. Across the board, on nearly every major issue of the day, from Iran to Syria to North Korea, the Bush administration is in retreat, abandoning the principled stands of yesteryear and replacing them with the unscrupulous and inexplicable policies now being pursued by the Department of State.... The result has effectively been a quiet coup, as George W. Clinton replaces Bush. And that spells trouble, big trouble, in the War on Terror -- not only for Israel, but for America too. It is not that the Bush Doctrine is dead -- it most certainly isn't. But the way things are going of late, it sure seems to be in need of resuscitation."

## II. "The Greatest of Them All"

Conservative contributor Menachem Ben wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv (19/12): "George Bush junior will be listed in history as one of the greatest presidents that America and the world has ever had... Bush is much more than can be seen, even if all he has is rare courage and common sense, both a rare commodity in our political days, in Israel and all over the world.... Israel does not have or ever had such a marvelous friend as George Bush Jr..... That is why we better try to achieve in his term a creative peace with all our enemies."

## 12. Gaza:

### Summary:

Senior military correspondent and analyst Alex Fishman wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot: "You don't have to be a security cabinet member to realize that if the State of Israel wants to see President Bush here early next month -- this visit should not be accompanied by 200-300 Palestinians killed in an Israeli ground operation in the Gaza Strip."

Economic editor Nehemia Shtrasler wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: "There is a lot of talk here about the withdrawal from Gaza, but nobody mentions that Gaza is surrounded and starved.... It is clear that in a situation like this, hatred wins out and the desire to avenge is the only hope. But here, all they are talking about is the suffering of Sderot."

### Block Quotes:

## 1I. "Measured and Calculated Actions"

Senior military correspondent and analyst Alex Fishman wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (12/19): "You don't have to be a security cabinet member to realize that if the State of Israel wants to see President Bush here early next month -- this visit should not be accompanied by 200-300 Palestinians killed in an Israeli ground operation in the Gaza Strip. Just as the army went into lower gear before the Annapolis conference, it will likely also let up on the gas pedal on the eve of Bush's visit... But in the meantime, between the conference and the visit, the Israeli political echelon has to show, after all, that it is doing something to counter the continuous Kassam rocket fire. So the military echelon is cautiously raising the bar against the terror from Gaza. In the meantime, no problems are being solved, rather the height of the flames is being played with. This is playing with fire -- while trying to buy time.... Neither does the IDF want, at the present stage, an all-out clash.... And therefore, the targeted killings are also not a sign of things to come. They are meant to buy time. That's why these actions are measured and calculated. Nobody is yet attacking the political leadership of Hamas, nor even Islamic

Jihad's political leaders.... In short: no step is being taken that could deteriorate the situation in Gaza at a timing inconvenient for Israel."

## II. "The Suffering in Gaza"

Economic editor Nehemia Shtrasler wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (19/12): "There is a lot of talk here about the withdrawal from Gaza, but nobody mentions that Gaza is surrounded and starved. The situation there has been degenerating ever since the withdrawal.... Israel recently reduced the transfer of goods, including food, and the supply of fuel to the Gaza Strip. All this is leading to extreme shortage, tremendous despair and a feeling that there is nothing to lose. It is clear that in a situation like this, hatred wins out and the desire to avenge is the only hope. But here, all they are talking about is the suffering of Sderot."

JONES